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**Collection Title** Lady Bird Johnson's Diary

**Folder Title** April 1 - 30, 1968 [Book 55]

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**Paper Clip Removed from 04/11/1968, pages 1 - 10.**

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THURSDAY, APRIL 11 WND

I went into Lyndon's room early to have breakfast with him and there in earnest conversation was Ambassador Bunker. He interests me very much--gentle, patrician. I think he must command the respect of people of most diverse beliefs. He was speaking of countries or people that have a vested interest in our failure. They were talking about the peace negotiations and Lyndon said, "This is the most important thing in the world to me." I caught phrases. "I am not going into any Communist capital. I am not going to run or bend or stretch". This was Lyndon. "And when you ascertained her <sup>re</sup> action to our four suggestions, right now try to get the inertia out of them". I think he was speaking of our State Department. "They have got to learn that they are negotiating with the U. S., Fulbright notwithstanding, but I do not appreciate their conducting negotiations by United Press". Lyndon was speaking of the sort of countries that could be sites. "They should be neutral, telephones untapped, good communications. I am not going to let them use me". And then something about Fulbright thinks he and Cooper ought to head the negotiations delegation. <sup>#</sup> At one point the Ambassador drew from his pocket a letter from his wife written right after Lyndon had announced that he would not run again. It was so sweet. She quoted a verse from the Bible. I think it was Luke 5 - 14. So many of these letters quote from the Bible. Well, if we can earn the respect of people like Ellsworth Bunker and his wife, I am proud. At one point he said

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rather wryly in his understated way that the TET offensive had more effect here than it did in Vietnam. The Vietnamese stood up to it.

At eleven that morning I met with Liz and Bess and Nash and Rex Scouten and Sharon in what I affectionately think of as my Board of Directors room--the Treaty Room--and we talked about the beautification luncheon which is coming up next Wednesday. It has been planned and unplanned so many times. We now have definitely given up the boat trip. I still want the bus trip, but because the height of the blooming season is over, we will omit Haines Point. We decided the simplest thing to do would be to pile in cars and just take the route. On the way I saw really very little evidence of the burning and looting we had read so much about, although we were going through a part of the disturbed area. I did see painted on one or two store windows the words "Soul Brothers". And on one it said, "please don't take our jobs away". I guess it meant if they burnt the place down. Then we went by Capp<sup>er</sup> <sup>(a housing development)</sup>. Then along Columbia Island where the daffodils are beautiful but so full that you know they will be nearly gone by next Wednesday.

Back at the White House I had lunch on a tray in my room and then at two o'clock went down to the Library where the Institute for Interior Designers--or rather some of their top officials and Board of Directors--were gathered to give me a Citation of Merit with Miss Genevieve Hendricks as the chief spokesman and <sup>it was because of her</sup> that I particularly wanted to see them. There were about twenty officers

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and members of the local Board of Governors, a small contingent of Press. There were pictures and then Miss Hendricks presented me the scroll and made a lengthy, full<sup>some</sup>, warm, dear speech about the twenty-four years we had worked together. — In her words, "to make beauty in your several homes." And indeed we do go back to the early days at 30th Place when the children were still in play pens. It is one of Luci's private jokes about me that I identify 1947 <sup>as</sup> ~~as~~ not the year that she was born, but the year I bought the big couch.

The National President, Mr. James M. Smith, went around the circle with me introducing the members and naturally there were several from Texas. One of whom was a good friend of Neva West. We had a pleasant little visit. I pointed out some of the additions since they were here last in this room which they had so generously furnished for the White House--the <sup>Eakins'</sup> ~~Akin's~~ portrait, the gift of Mr. Hirshhorn, a new Duncan <sup>Phyfe</sup> ~~Fire~~ chair. We had refreshments and I was back upstairs in about thirty-five

minutes but not for long. <sup>P</sup> Today was one of those days I could be <sup>? Wrong - makes to</sup> afloat in <sup>some</sup> peace and the second one was at three o'clock for a class of Foxcroft girls, some thirty-five extraordinarily good looking young girls--about sixteen I would say--with their Dean and Head Master. I had known Sophia <sup>Engelhardt</sup> ~~Ingelhardt~~ was among them and was looking for her with that special warmth of recognition that I, as a guest, used to always value when I went to the White House, or anywhere for that matter, and want so much

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to have for those I should know, especially the children of friends. I had not done my homework well. Later I noticed that Miss Alita Morgan, Governor Harriman's granddaughter, had been among the guests. I give myself C-minus.<sup>1</sup> My wonderful staff always brings me the guest list and I usually study it diligently, especially just before I go down but the day had been too busy. I hope the time never comes, and now that the time is short it never will probably, when I am too hardened or indifferent or satiated <sup>to</sup> ~~but~~ try to know them. Very likely there were others too. They were a bright eyed, attractive bunch of young women. We had tea--this time in the Blue Room--and I stood around talking to them, much longer I believe than they had expected, about the Presidential portraits, the other art, my favorite things in the White House. <sup>#P</sup> Sometime in the course of the meeting I got word that there was going to be the signing of the Civil Rights Bill passed just yesterday by the House, in the East Room at five o'clock and that these young ladies had been asked to stay on and so I underlined the invitation and left them to their tour of the house and was back upstairs for nearly an hour and a half's work before it was time to go down in the East Room with Lyndon for the signing of the Civil Rights Bill.

We entered the East Room to prolonged clapping, an enormous number from the Press, an unusually large group from Congress, the Cabinet and Civil Rights leaders, and over in one corner all of the

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Foxcroft girls which was to me somehow a humorous touch in the sign of changing times. It was a dramatic setting, this signing of the third major Civil Rights Act of Lyndon's Presidency, and his speech I thought was good. "All America was outraged by the assassination of the Reverend Martin Luther King. It was also outraged by the looting and burning that defiles our democracy. We just must put our shoulders together and put a stop to both. The time is here. Action must be now. Violence cannot redress a solitary wrong or remedy a single unfairness".<sup>#</sup> And then he passed it back to Congress with an appeal to them to enact some twenty programs that he had recommended already this year that deal with social justice. We went into the Blue Room for the receiving line and for the second time I met all the Foxcroft girls and was back upstairs with just minutes to change, before six, into my brown lace dress for the mass departure of Cabinet Officers, the farewell party that had been planned for the McNamaras and the Gardners and the Trowbridges. Only yesterday Larry O'Brien had resigned and Bess had come to me rather grimly and said, "would you like to include Larry O'Brien in the party tomorrow as one of the honorees?" I do not remember for sure, but I think she said she had already asked the President and he said yes, so I said sure. We will just give him a blank tray and engrave it later and I adjusted the inscription which was to be put on it.<sup>#</sup> These parties have always held a sweet nostalgic sort of quality, saying goodbye to someone

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you have worked with closely and well and hard and formed sort of a bond of friendship--this forged in no other way except possibly in battle. This one was already a sort of an emotional tour de force with the three of them and adding Larry O'Brien gave it still another dimension. But underlying all of the events, all of the emotions of the day, was the one I kept on coming back to--Patrick was leaving sometime this evening. The Alden Smiths had come up to be with them. That is one of Luci's many resources, a half a dozen or more young couples that are close friends who share everything with them both. Just as I started into the party Luci called me and said, "Mother, will you come in our room a minute?" I went in. Her face was so small and white and the baby who is always so happy was restless and fussy. I think he knew all day that something was going on. She said, "Mother, Pat is leaving in about thirty minutes." I said, I will be back in just a minute. <sup>#</sup> So I went to the door of the Yellow Room and the first person in was Larry O'Brien who said, "Mrs. Johnson, I want you to know that nobody has ever been nicer to me than your husband." He looked so strained I ~~thought to have~~ felt sorry for him. ~~I tried, I was still, I was still, I was still~~ <sup>9</sup> and turned quickly to the next guest. There was no need of a receiving line--so informal it was--we had all known each other a long time... The honor guests and members of their families and closest friends. I hugged Marnie and Bob and they both looked brown and rested and so did the

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Trowbridges. They are both so young and handsome. It is cruel that he is snatched out of the front line like this by a heart attack at 37. John and Aida Gardner, handsome, patrician, and as they always have been, a little removed from it all--from the world of politics I mean. Most of the Cabinet was there, Alan and Flavil Boyd, the Wilbur Cohens, the Clark Cliffords, Georgia Clark without Ramsey, and Virginia Rusk without Dean, who she said, was sick, and C.R. Smith, Stu and Lee--she said she was feeling fine--and Bill and Jane Wirtz. Only the Fowlers and Freemans were absent, and there were close staff members--the Joe Califanos, the George Christians and Walt Rostows, and the Marvin Watsons and relatives of most of the honor guests. The O'Briens had not put on any guests at all. It surprised me pleasantly that the McNamaras had requested the Valentis. ~~And~~ It is always pleasant to have Florence Mahoney to a party. She was a request of the Gardners. Lynda Bird came. She feels close to nearly everyone in the Cabinet. <sup>#</sup> As soon as I greeted everybody and the drinks were being passed, I slipped out and went back into Luci's room and there was a tableau that I shall always remember--Patrick in uniform, with a huge round can under one arm. I asked what it was--cookies.

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He put down one armful and scooped up his son in the other. I hugged them all together and said rather foolishly, "Are you going right now?" And Luci said, "No, Mother, Patrick is going upstairs to sign his

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will." Larry Temple, I believe, had prepared it and was waiting for them up in the Solarium where most of their courtship had taken place. And so they went down the hall--Patrick and Luci and baby and with them the Alden Smiths. Later Luci told me that when they got to the airport and Patrick said goodbye that the baby cried and cried and beat on the window of the car with the palms of his little hands. At ten months he knew something was happening.

I went back in the Yellow Room. Lyndon was late, of course, but not very, and after circling the room greeting all the guests, he got down to the business of his speech with a certain dispatch. I stood by him to give the trays. I remember his words as more of a eulogy to the whole quality of the men who leave ~~for~~ a more comfortable and more remunerative post to work for their Government in the office of Cabinet. But I remember with the rising of the heart one particular pointing out of a Cabinet Member who was not there. He spoke of Rusk as the noblest Roman of them all and then he began by handing me the trays, the McNamara's and I gave it to Margy. And Bob came forward beginning his little talk laughingly. "Once before I tried to express myself about this Administration with disastrous results". And I could see, and I liked it, that the tide of emotion of warmth still ran very strongly in him. It was a dear speech and I loved it and I think his feeling for Lyndon came through, ~~and~~ <sup>th</sup> then we gave the tray for Secretary Gardner to Aida and in his cool elegant

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way he spoke of his gratitude for working in this Administration. And I felt good about the things he said about Lyndon ~~except there was one abrasive moment when he quoted Senator Robert Kennedy, and then went on to say, "I can be excused for mistaking Senator Kennedy because Aristotle said that first."~~ And ended with, "and as for Lady Bird, words fail me", which, of course, left me in a melting confusion of smiles. And then, Sandy Trowbridge spoke and in a way very much the junior here. His was the most forthright, fresh, and good and it endeared them to me as I have increasingly felt through these brief months. And then Larry O'Brien spoke and it was a hard spot. He tried to be humorous. It was not. I can only describe it in one word--lame.

The party went on for quite a little while and I made a point of sitting down on the sofa with Bob McNamara and telling him a bit about the School of Public Service and the Library and that when it opened I hoped that we would have a big sort of conclave on great minds in various fields with speeches on the twenty-first century and that I hereby asked him to be one of the speakers. And he said, "you've got me signed up. I will." Then I tried to spend special attention on the relatives like John Gardner's sister, Mrs. Doulter, Sandy Trowbridge's mother, Mrs. Hertzog and the other close friends of the honor guests and as always on the Arthur Goldbergs whom I like tremendously, although I see the gap widening.

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Most of the guests left about eight. Lyndon had long ago gone back to the office. The Valentis and the Doug Caters and Florence Mahoney, who had been with the Valentis, lingered. And a little past nine Lyndon returned and we went into dinner. Luci, looking still small and white and silent, for her, and protectively flanked by the Alden Smiths, had come back from the airport and Lynda and we all sat down for dinner. What a day it had been.

The picture of Patrick was what I would remember. It was so ordinary--repeated all across this land and over a span of two centuries. And I was so proud of him and so proud of the country that produced young folks like him and Chuck.

The guests left about ten and I had a rub and the pictures of the day drifted through my mind. I was glad that I had live it--every moment of it--but I felt pummeled, exhausted at the end of it and what then must Lyndon feel?